

The Place and Value of Cultural Development in Architecture and Urbanism

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Abstract

Development is one of the most important demands of modern societies, which depicts different forms of economic, political, social and cultural situation of the community. Architecture as a social phenomenon is rooted in the culture and affects it and reflects human thoughts in relation to space, aesthetics, and culture. That is why the architecture of each period is reflected in its art and culture and is proportional to the changes that occur in other areas of life and art. Thus, this issue is the most important concern of theorists and experts in the field of culture and architecture. In this study, the problem is stated by using the analytical method and library studies also relying on the literature of the subject. The main challenges before cultural development in Iran provides ground for opportunities and threats that shows the more need for efficient planning and effective cultural management in Iran. When architectural and urban space is developed in community-based cultural contexts in time and is continuously reflected in the spatial dimension in a large-scale, it can lead to a cultural development growth in architecture and urbanism.

Keywords: cultural development, identity, culture, architecture, urbanization

Introduction

Orientation of our culture has always been based on human nature and thought, which is effective in shaping the environments and the creation of architecture. Since this space is considered a human need and these needs are always met in the way of wisdom and divine nature, before considering architecture as a technical specialty, it should be seen as an art and its cultural aspects should be considered. Architectural spaces are developed based on cultural concepts in the spatial dimension and are reflected in the temporal dimension. Art as a communication system is associated with the language and culture and in order to receive messages it contains the cultural context in which created art should be studied and recognized, otherwise its meaning cannot be properly understood. One task of the artist in this regard is to help common people to organize the world of their culture.

In fact, the artist should manifest signs of the nature with a stronger and more readable expression for ordinary people to realize and overcome the barriers.

Development

A) Definitions of development are diverse and its principles are formed by economic, political, and cultural. Development is the actual channel of realization of ideals, desires and aspirations of human societies.

B) Favorable development of communities occurs due to the simultaneous realization of economic, political, social and cultural development.

With regard to the first hypothesis some general definitions will be mentioned below:

a. Development is optimization of using human and material potentials of a community (Saiolghalam, 1991).

b. Development is a process in which society is transformed from an undesirable situation to a desirable one. This process takes place in all institutions of a society and its nature essentially is to use all the power and potential of society. In other words, in the development process organizing

talents of each society is fertilized and prospered economically or socially, politically and culturally (Asadi, 1991).

c. Development is the tendency to self-sufficiency and to achieve creative participation of people to fully exploiting the productive national forces of society and its human capacity (Report of the Independent Commission on global Growth and Development issues)

d. Development can be defined as a series of activities conducted in developing desirable conditions based on the value system accepted in the society. In other words, development is a process that turns undesirable conditions of life to the desirable ones.

e. Development in a general sense is the transition from tradition to modernity which applies to countries that have already been developed (Ghaziyan). Despite the various definitions of development, all definitions are common in the fact that societies need to create appropriate conditions to achieve social desirability and convenient facilities from the economic, political and cultural aspect. Development is a trend for strengthening social relationships and fostering talent, optimal use of natural resources and the possibility for development of all sectors of society and does not belong to a specific time and place and is an experimental field for any society seeking it. In different conditions and possibilities of countries evolution of development are various. Appropriate planning and pre-planned decision-making play an important role in accelerating the development. Many countries apply the process of economic development and some of them set cultural and political development as a criterion for work. However, development is first and foremost regulated collection that cannot be changed and separated. Therefore, this is a general rule. On the one hand, development has different factors that should be supported by special political and social forces and also by proposing an ideological framework the material and spiritual development of a society is realized. "Habermas" is one of the scholars that described the cultural dimension of development as very important and expressed the cultural rationality against instrumental rationality and he believes that Western countries have not been developed completely or have been developed only in the economic dimension, i.e. only their technological capability has changed. So far, the emergence of cultural rationality is truly happened in no society. This view forms the spiritual side of the development. Many failures of development in the third world countries were precisely because of non-economic factors that either deliberately or inadvertently were excluded from the analysis of the causes of development including cultural development that leaves an accelerating and informing effect on trends of development behind them.

Culture

The word culture has different definitions from various perspectives. Although, culture may have an interdisciplinary definition including structural totality, the distinction between areas of definition causes that future position and orientation to be fully specified and the path to its critical evaluation becomes smoother.

Culture was first used to refer to growing crops and animals of the word in English and correlated well with the concept of religious worship. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, culture was used little by little to mean improvement of society as a whole and was used as a value equivalent for civilization. With the advent of Romanticism school in Industrial Revolution period, the term culture was used to measure spiritual growth. But, with the advent of romantic nationalism in the nineteenth century, a new definition of the word emerged that emphasized on traditions and culture of everyday life as cultural dimensions. Culture from other people's perspective has got different definitions. In Giddens' words; at best, culture can be defined as a set of ways of life (Fallahi, 2004). Specific temporal and spatial methods defined in the real situation. This lifestyle is composed of the three main pillars including the values that people maintain, norms that people

obey and material things that people employ, from goods to transport systems to buildings and urban facilities. Three main elements of culture are completely interacted with each other. Ongoing involvement of culture with the physical elements changed cultural movement into an uninterrupted flow and modifying previous value systems and the interpretation and implementation of new value. Therefore, cultures are not static and are constantly moving and changing. Diversity and differentiation is the main characteristic of contemporary culture. Culture means clarifying the flourishing inner talents and it is the cultured nation, which finds and reveals the talents. Unlocking the hidden talents of the man and the environment will result in development and progress. With this attitude, we realize the fact that development is not achieved without culture (Waller Stein, 1999). Culture has a high share in human social development and it is something that is hidden in all human activities and is an essential factor of freedom, justice and economic discipline in the world.

Cultural Development

Cultural development means changing and creating values, ethical relationships, and appropriate norms that provide the required fields in the community to satisfy human needs. Regarding the role of culture in the development, some experts by highlighting the importance of the role of culture in the development believe that culture is a set of ideas and beliefs that bears the following characteristics:

- a. It is acceptable and accepted by the majority.
- b. Its adaption has a persuasive aspect, but need no argue.

c. Creation or formation of it will take time (Ashori, 1979). Cultural development refers to the change and creation of relationships and moral values and appropriate norms that provide the required fields in the form of community for the satisfaction of human needs. Developed culture has some features, which speeds up the development process and in this respect, has attracted the attention of scholars. In other words, it can be said that developed culture is a culture that has exactly three distinct characteristics that have already been mentioned. Lack of attention to cultural development can provide one of the major problems in development. Iranian historical experience shows that the society needed mental preparation, realization of the need to develop and firm decision about it before anything else. This requires the development of culture and its relation to other aspects of development. Thus, from the perspective of sociologists, development in addition to improving economic indicators that lies mainly on per capita income includes social indicators such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, minimal nutrition, housing shortages, inadequate training, etc. Along with the above criteria, this can be relatively handled in the field of culture and politics to the rise and progress of a society. Not only, revolution is no exception of this situation, but also in terms of cultural identity of the system, cultural realization of development is considered as one of the main priorities.

Architecture and urbanism

Like other arts, technologies and human productions, architecture in addition to its appearance possesses genuine spiritual aspect designed in response to both spiritual and material human needs (coordinated with its spirit and life). Thus, a building is a single body whose spirit is a manifestation of cultural spirit and worldview of the community. In Iranian mind, the word architecture is based on the relationship between humans and the supernatural thinking that always has a much broader meaning and a more spiritual sense than common sense (Naghizadeh, 2003).

In the Iranian culture and mind there is the belief that architecture is the art of forming the space based on needs, look and historical perspective of human towards the world and human and its origin and is correlated with the kind of religious or worldly culture (Madadpour, 1999). In other words, architectural work is to form the place (Rikhtegaran, 2000). Transformations happened in the

concept of culture depend on the trend of thinking evolution of contemporary civilization that by empirical science and common rationalistic mind denies the spiritual aspect of human life and principally the spiritual aspect of the world. In the field of architecture, modernism with the slogan of development and growth imposes itself on the human society and an undeveloped country (regarding industry), which seeks its identity in assimilation with the West tries to repeat and imitate alien architectural patterns. Modern architecture is so materialized and what is presented as the most critical and fascinating issue among architectures and urban planner is summarized in correlating form and function and or prioritizing one over the other (Falamaki, 1977). Definitions given for a city are derived from presuppositions and the most important of which includes the number of population, area, and the majority of people. Most of these definitions ignore human being and particularly debate over planning and designing and take in to account issues such as type and method of production, activities, economy and quantitative issues as the main criteria. Briefly, a city as the manifestation of cultural values is formed based on ideals and principles of worldview of its residents and induces the meanings to human beings and the same relationship of the environment and human can be considered as an aspect of life. In fact, human by being located in the city and connecting with it in addition to tangible material aspects perceives a meaning which includes different levels depending on the cultural field and human life (Groter, 1997).

City not simply as the body

Most programs and plans provided for a city are dealing with problems because its authorities do not clearly understand its concept. A city as a pure physical reality has already been studied a lot but most answers are inefficient, thus another factor existing in a city is a temporal manifestation of social institutions which is studied by socialists and geographers. On the other hand, the artificial space pays attention to the physical space so what is considered by architects is the morphology of space (Madanipour, 2009). A modernist considered cities as a body that can be controlled with regard to categorization and regionalization. In 1966 Christopher Alexander in a research entitled "A city is not a tree" criticized this view.

Today's cities are mostly known by physical elements of buildings and sites that are properly designed. What exists in a city statically is the city's physical appearance. However, the presence of man causes accidents in the environment that residents perceive another factor except the body which is effective in development of city's quality. A phenomenon emerges in the city that is generated as a result of human's experience and perception.

The role of religion, politics and economy in the city's appearance

Religion, politics and economy also play an important role in transforming cities appearance and urban buildings. No significant monument has ever remained in countries with no rich cultural history and political and economic power. Whenever a great emperor sun would set, the architecture of that area and region would vanish and by the rise of another monarchy, architecture and urbanism would revive. In countries such as Iran which has been frequently attacked by various emperors and tribes of the world, we can see the outcomes of these attacks in the appearance of the buildings of different eras, as without identification and awareness of these transformations, no proper reason can be found for the changes in buildings' appearance of the previous eras.

People-oriented

People-orientation is one of the features of Islamic architecture which has an ancient root. Architecting for people and taking the audience into account as an important principle in the mind of Iranian architecture mind lead to the creation of many beautiful and persistent designs. Human proportions and scales play important role in urbanism and architecture and along with attending to

these issues pay attention to utilization of biological material and the harmony with the surrounding environment increases the beauty of buildings and cities.

Some of the effective factors in the formation of architectural and urban spaces:

- a. Material factors: Substance, building knowledge, and technology - economy
- b. Environmental factors: climate, natural environment, artificial environment
- c. Functional elements including spatial characteristics and behavioral patterns of activity, and technology and living tools
- d. Cultural factors: Culture and sustainable patterns - beauty, fashion and taste - innovation and creativity

Among the above factors, historical-temporal factors as well as cultural-environmental factors play an important role. Man in the creation of biological environments, and even tools tries in the first step to pay attention to material, tangible and functional benefits and pays attention, if possible, to artistic and cultural aspects of space or a phenomenon and creates and tries the work or the space to be beautiful. The different layers of aesthetic values can be classified into three groups:

- a. The old stable values and forms
- b. Almost stable and light values and forms
- c. Temporary values and forms or fashion

In architecture, like other arts, the influence of some phenomena and deep manifestations of religious and national culture can be observed as persistent pattern and forms. Some of these patterns and designs in Iranian architecture like Chahar Saffeh and Chahar Bagh which are the main elements and phenomena of culture and civilization of a nation or ethnic are persistent and long-lasting. Of course, their persistency does not mean the lack of dynamicity. In the history of a nation's art, several styles may be emerged in any art or even some styles may be formed in some geographical fields of an era. Some values and forms are paid attention to in all arts and some industries are paid attention to in a short period of time. These types of value do not have a fundamental and structural impact and emerge as a result of different cultural and artistic transformations and exchanges between groups, ethnics and nations. Fashion which is emerged as a result of the influence of social and cultural changes and exchanges, and we are broadly facing it in modern times is considered as an unstable and temporary form. Innovation of the artist from one hand depends on the history and culture of designing in a society and on the other hand depends on the individual capabilities and the specific innovation of the artist. This factor is somehow related to the artistic awareness and the deepness of designing culture and cultural and artistic exchanges within a society or with other societies. In other words, the innovation of artist is not formed in vacuum; rather it is realized in a historical-cultural context influencing the content and shape of the work.

The importance of the concept of form or shape in architecture discipline

The issue of form in relation with architecture discipline can be analyzed in two states, first when we encounter with the available man-made architecture, second when we look at architecture as something we intend to create.

In the first case, the architecture space is not understood without recognizing the culture of its creator and what is arisen out of this culture, after moving through thoughts, policies, technics and innovations, it is a phenomenon which speaks through its shape. The form of buildings made by others is their words about that building and is derived from their culture regarding architecture and or indicates their architecture's discipline. In the second case, when we try to form a new architecture, if it requires to be described, there is no way except expressing about its form. The form of architecture is considered as a context to transfer cultural messages. When architecture was

created in the past, it brings with its culture and therefore a part of the culture lies in ancient architecture. Today, culture and architecture cannot be separated and inner content and concept exist behind every form. In this view, human beings are seen as living creatures to express their inner content and turn to external bodies and shapes and use them to conceptualize what is within them. These concepts do not bear transient changes.

The reason for human culture longevity

The fluidity of human culture is the reason for their survival over time both culturally and traditionally. In Iran even with the great evolution created with the emergence of Islam, most customs, arts and traditions of Zoroastrian being aligned with Islam were applied with a little transformation. Our rich culture manifested its best in the architecture of different eras. Even great evolutions which emerged as a result of change in customs and traditions did not prevent the continuous progress of Iranian culture and civilization.

Cultural cities

Cultural cities are cities in which cultural complex and monuments are significant, pivotal and important elements. These monuments include religious buildings, cultural, historical, educational heritage, museums, exhibitions, libraries, convention centers, etc. for many years the supporters of architecture were mainly elites and the rich. The home and work place of common people was around the architecture area. The nineteenth century was marked by the movement of the architecture. The popularity in its nineteenth century concept meant “belonging to people”. In fact, we should look at democratization architecture as a movement which significantly affects architectural growth and consequently the cultural growth by the emergence of works belonged to people. Accordingly, today most countries pay attention to the cultural development based on two basic factors below:

A) Maintenance, repair and revival of cultural-historical monuments

The ancient memoirs especially historical constructions are considered as the significant elements of nations and civilizations that form a part of their identity. Thus, preserving and reviving them by involving and enticing the public sensitivity towards historical buildings is an important strategy for the cultural growth and development.

B) Purposeful creation of cultural elements

Creation, development and revival of cultural elements are the second main factors of cultural societies which mostly take place as a result of exact and purposeful planning. Attending to cities development and the necessity of expanding collective and cultural spaces, paying attention to the rapid growth and manifestation of cultural beauties, introducing arts and works of civilizations and countries as well as enriching leisure time of the public with an approach to more familiarity and true recognition to promote society's culture are taken into account. It is manifested that in developed countries by holding international contest or giving cultural buildings design to powerful architecture companies with international fame their real form are shown. Over all, attending to cultural elements in addition to developing the tourism industry which itself causes the flow of capital and the possibility of paying more attention to people, paves the way for detailed planning for the progress of that society (Pirnia, & Memarian 1996).).

- Culture is the link between the target (perfectionism) and programs (art, science, religion).
- The form of architecture is created by philosophical and environmental features and the factor of time shapes the new spaces due to evolution nature of human life as the main factor. The architectural form is the most visible indicator of culture's effect on architecture.

- Maintenance and repetition of ancient forms is not taken into account the loyalty to the culture and art of a land and in designing an art dynamic and innovative look is considered a priority.
- Architecture transfers meaning not the form.
- Architecture has two main cultural and scientific factors and whenever one factor gets weak over time, the result grows insufficiently and incompletely.
- Considering fundamental factors of culture and art in a building leads a typical and lackluster building to a complete and significant architecture. The work in which ideals, history, culture, taste and thought and art of a society lie aligned with a perception to the facts and necessities of the building and function also caused excellence in the architects' expression and the message of architecture is manifested in it.

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